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New England
Conservatory

Concert Program

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Great Music for a Great Space:

Sanctuary

NEC Symphonic Choir &
NEC Chamber Singers

Erica J. Washburn, conductor

with
chamber ensembles

Nancy Schoen, mezzo-soprano

Thursday, April 25, 2024

7:30 p.m.

NEC's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

John Corigliano
(b. 1938)

Fern Hill (1961)

Nancy Schoen, mezzo-soprano
NEC Symphonic Choir

Subin Oh, flute
Kelley Osterberg, oboe
Tyler Bourque, clarinet
Rachel Brake, French horn
Jordan Hadrill, Peixuan Wu, Jiaxin Lin, violin 1
Caroline Smoak, Emily Lin, violin 2
Eunha Kwon, Joy Hsieh, viola
Zachary Keum, Jung ah Lee, Michelle Jung, cello
Yizhen Wang, double bass
Jingtong Zheng, harp

Short pause

Caroline Shaw
(b. 1982)

To the Hands (2016)

Prelude
in medio / in the midst
Her beacon-hand beckons
ever ever ever
Litany of the Displaced
i will hold you

NEC Chamber Singers

Caroline Smoak, Jordan Hadrill, violin
Peter Jablokow, viola
Kei Otake, cello
Yizhen Wang, double bass

We are deeply grateful to
Bob Winters, Rayna DeYoung, and the Concert Halls staff;
Lisa Nigris and the Recording and Performance Technology staff;
and our orchestral colleagues

Tonight's program is focused on the inter- and intrapersonal impacts of sanctuary, and the definition of the word as both a noun and an adjective. The two selected works, both by Pulitzer Prize winning composers, are John Corigliano's *Fern Hill* and Caroline Shaw's *To the Hands*.

Fern Hill, a setting of the poem by Dylan Thomas, looks back with bittersweet longing at the innocence and freedom of his childhood summers on a Welsh farm, a time before life had stepped in and taught him the concepts of mortality, change, and loss. *To the Hands* takes texts from the Old Testament, Emma Lazarus' "The New Colossus", and current statistics of the displaced persons around the world today. The search for safety, the pain of losing one's innocence or homeland, and the yearning for sanctuary have been constants in human history—and perhaps never so widespread as in the world we live in today.

Corigliano *Fern Hill*

I first encountered Dylan Thomas' work in 1959, my last undergraduate year at Columbia College. It was a revelation. Both the sound and structures of Thomas's words were astonishingly musical. Not by accident, either: "What the words meant was of secondary importance; what matters was the sound of them...these words were as the notes of bells, the sounds of musical instruments," he wrote in his *Poetic Manifesto* of 1951. I was irresistibly drawn to translate his music into mine.

One poem captivated me: *Fern Hill*, about the poet's "young and easy" summers at his family's farm of the same name. I wanted to write this work as a gift for my high-school music teacher, Mrs. Bella Tillis, who first encouraged my musical ambitions. She introduced *Fern Hill* with piano accompanying her (and, once, my) school choir.

Fern Hill is a blithe poem, yet touched by darkness; time finally holds the poet "green and dying," but the poem itself, formally just an ABA song extended into a wide arch, sings joyously of youth and its keen perceptions. I set it for mezzo-soprano solo, chorus, and orchestra, aiming to match the forthright lyricism of the text. (The direction "with simplicity" is everywhere in the printed score.)

– John Corigliano

Now as I was young and easy under the apple boughs
About the liling house and happy as the grass was green,
 The night above the dingle starry,
 Time let me hail and climb
 Golden in the heydays of his eyes,
And honoured among wagons I was prince of the apple towns
And once below a time I lordly had the trees and leaves
 Trail with daisies and barley
 Down the rivers of the windfall light.

And as I was green and carefree, famous among the barns
About the happy yard and singing as the farm was home,
 In the sun that is young once only,
 Time let me play and be
 Golden in the mercy of his means,
And green and golden I was huntsman and herdsman, the calves
Sang to my horn, the foxes on the hills barked clear and cold,
 And the sabbath rang slowly
 In the pebbles of the holy streams.

All the sun long it was running, it was lovely, the hay
Fields high as the house, the tunes from the chimneys, it was air
 And playing, lovely and watery
 And fire green as grass.
 And nightly under the simple stars
As I rode to sleep the owls were bearing the farm away,
All the moon long I heard, blessed among stables, the nightjars
 Flying with the ricks, and the horses
 Flashing into the dark.

And then to awake, and the farm, like a wanderer white
With the dew, come back, the cock on his shoulder: it was all
 Shining, it was Adam and maiden,
 The sky gathered again
 And the sun grew round that very day.
So it must have been after the birth of the simple light
In the first, spinning place, the spellbound horses walking warm
 Out of the whinnying green stable
 On to the fields of praise.

And honoured among foxes and pheasants by the gay house
Under the new made clouds and happy as the heart was long,
 In the sun born over and over,
 I ran my heedless ways,
 My wishes raced through the house high hay
And nothing I cared, at my sky blue trades, that time allows
In all his tuneful turning so few and such morning songs
 Before the children green and golden
 Follow him out of grace.

Nothing I cared, in the lamb white days, that time would take me
Up to the swallow thronged loft by the shadow of my hand,
 In the moon that is always rising,
 Nor that riding to sleep
 I should hear him fly with the high fields
And wake to the farm forever fled from the childless land.
Oh as I was young and easy in the mercy of his means,
 Time held me green and dying
 Though I sang in my chains like the sea.

Dylan Thomas

Shaw *To the Hands*

The Crossing commissioned *To the Hands* as a response to *Ad manus* from Dieterich Buxtehude's 17th century masterpiece, *Membra Jesu Nostris*. It is a part of the Seven Responses project and was performed by members of The Crossing, the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), and the early music ensemble Quicksilver, alongside the complete Buxtehude and new works by six other composers.

To the Hands begins inside the 17th century sound of Buxtehude. It expands and colors and breaks this language, as the piece's core considerations, of the suffering of those around the world seeking refuge, and of our role and responsibility in these global and local crises, gradually come into focus.

The prelude turns the tune of *Ad manus* into a wordless plainchant melody, punctured later by the strings' introduction of an unsettling pattern. The second movement fragments Buxtehude's choral setting of the central question, "*quid sunt plagae istae in medio manuum tuarum,*" or "what are these wounds in the midst of your hands." It settles finally on an inversion of the question, so that we reflect, "What are these wounds in the midst of our hands?" We notice what may have been done to us, but we also question what we have done and what our role has been in these wounds we see before us.

The text that follows in the third movement is a riff on Emma Lazarus' sonnet *The New Colossus*, famous for its engraving at the base of the Statue of Liberty. The poem's lines "Give me your tired, your poor,/ Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free" and its reference to the statue's "beacon-hand" present a very different image of a hand—one that is open, beckoning, and strong. No wounds are to be found there—only comfort for those caught in a dangerous and complex environment. While third movement operates in broad strokes from a distance, the fourth zooms in on the map so far that we see the intimate scene of an old woman in her home, maybe setting the table for dinner alone. Who is she, where has she been, whose lives has she left? This simple image melts into a meditation on the words *in caverna* from the *Song of Solomon*, found in Buxtehude's fourth section, *Ad latus*.

In the fifth movement the harmony is passed around from one string instrument to another, overlapping only briefly, while numerical figures are spoken by the choir. These are global figures of internally displaced persons, by country, sourced from the

Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) data reported in May 2015 (accessed on 20/03/2016 at www.internaldisplacement.org). Sometimes data is the cruelest and most honest poetry.

The sixth and final movement unfolds the words *in caverna* into the tumbling and comforting promise of “ever ever” — “ever ever will I hold you, ever ever will I enfold you”. They could be the words of Christ, or of a parent or friend or lover, or even of a nation.

– Caroline Shaw

Prelude [no text—choir on vowels only]

in medio / in the midst

[text from Buxtehude’s *Ad manus*—*Zechariah 13:6*—adapted by Caroline Shaw, with the addition of “in medio manuum nostrarum” (“in the midst of **our** hands”)]

<i>quid sunt plagae istae</i>	what are those wounds
<i>quid sunt plagae istae in medio manuum tuarum</i>	what are those wounds in the midst of your hands
<i>in medio</i>	in the midst
<i>quid sunt plagae istae</i>	what are those wounds
<i>quid sunt plagae istae in medio manuum nostrarum</i>	what are those wounds in the midst of our hands

Her beacon-hand beckons

[text by Caroline Shaw, responding to the 1883 sonnet “The New Colossus” by Emma Lazarus which was mounted on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty in 1903]

Her beacon-hand beckons:
give
give to me
those yearning to breathe free
tempest-tossed they cannot see
what lies beyond the olive tree
whose branch was lost amid the pleas
for mercy, mercy
give
give to me
your tired fighters fleeing flying
from the
from the
from
let them
I will be your refuge
I will be your refuge
I will be
I will be
we will be
we will

ever ever ever

[text by Caroline Shaw—the final line, *in caverna*, is from Buxtehude’s *Ad latus*—the line from *The Song of Songs*, *in foraminibus patrae, in caverna maceriae*, or “in the cleft of the rock, in the hollow of the cliff”]

ever ever ever
in the window sills or
the beveled edges
of the aging wooden frames that hold
old photographs
hands folded
folded
gently in her lap

ever ever
in the crevices
the never-ending efforts of
the grandmother’s tendons tending
to her bread and empty chairs
left for Elijah
where are they now

Litany of the Displaced

The choir speaks global figures of internal displacement, sourced from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (<http://www.internal-displacement.org/global-figures>—accessed 01/03/2016). The numbers spoken are the numbers of internally displaced persons by country, in ascending order. These are people, some of whom may have legal refugee status, who have been displaced within their own country due to armed conflict, situations of generalized violence or violations of human rights.

i will hold you

[text by Caroline Shaw—The final line is a reprise from the Zechariah text.]

i would hold you
i would hold you
ever ever will i hold you
ever ever will i enfold you

in medio
in medio
in medio
in medio
in medio manuum tuarum

New England Conservatory Choruses

Erica J. Washburn, Director of Choral Activities

Timothy Goliger, Bailee Green, Jackie Hu, Maggie Storm,
Calvin Isaac Wamser, Ying Ting Lena Wong, Henri Youmans,
and Honghao Howard Zheng - graduate conductors

Sally Millar, administrator

Changjin Ha, Lingbo Ma, Rafe Schaberg, rehearsal pianists

NEC Symphonic Choir

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Genie Alvarado	Hannah Miller
August Baik	Yechan Min
* Ilan Balzac	Samuel Mincarelli
Emelia Boydston	Yowon Nam
Peter Butler	Grace Navarro
Gia Cellucci	Daniela Pyne
‡ Coco Chapman	Quinn Rosenberg
Baian Chen	Nancy Schoen
Chen Chen	Samuel Schwartz
Xingyan Chen	Yide Shi
Daniel Chen Wang	* Tamir Shimshoni
Su Cong	Yunsun Shin
Ivy Evers	Eunchae Song
Timothy Goliger	‡ Maggie Storm
‡ Bailee Green	Minhyuk Suh
Jialin Han	Haolun Alan Sun
Cameron Hayden	‡ Matthew Tirona
Jinyu He	‡ Calvin Isaac Wamser
‡ Jackie Hu	Haowen Wang
Jane Ai Jian	Qizhen Steven Wang
‡ Yoomin Kang	Tianyou Wang
Ian Yoo Kim	Yinuo Wang
Song Hyeon Kim	Yixiang Wang
Molly Knight	Zhaoyuan Wang
Jinyoung Kweon	‡ McLain Weaver
Yu Lei	Lena Ying Ting Wong
Lucci Zimeng Li	Shanshan Xie
Matthew Li	Chenran Yang
Shawn Xiangyun Lian	ShengQiao Ye
Kira Lim	*Aimee Yermish
Hao Wei Lin	‡ Henri Youmans
Nine Lin	Honghao Howard Zheng
Angelina Pin-Hsin Lin	* Maggie Zheng

‡*Corigliano small chorus*

**community member*

NEC Chamber Singers

Pitiki Aliakai	Anna Poltronieri Tang
Ashley Chen	Rafe Schaberg
Anjulie Djearam	Rachel Solyn
Haijie Du	Maggie Storm
Timothy Goliger	Chloe Thum
Bailee Green	Valentine Umeh
Jackie Hu	Calvin Isaac Wamser
Siyu Leng	Ying Ting Lena Wong
Corinne Luebke-Brown	Yumeng Xing
Colin Miller	Henri Youmans
Yuanwei Ni	Honghao Howard Zheng
Nicholas Ottersberg Enriquez	

Erica J. Washburn

Director of Choral Activities

Conductor and mezzo-soprano Erica J. Washburn has been Director of Choral Activities at New England Conservatory since 2009. Known for her student-centric approach to classroom and rehearsal instruction, and commitment to the performance of new music, she is the recipient of several outstanding alumni awards, including the distinguished honor of induction to the Westminster Choir College Music Education Hall of Fame.

As a conductor, Washburn has worked with Kansas City, MO based Cardinalis, the Yale Schola Cantorum, the East Carolina University Women's Chorale, and the Eastman Women's Chorus. She is a sought-after guest clinician who frequently leads state and regional festival choruses, and spent five summers as a conductor and voice faculty member for the New York State Summer School of the Arts School of Choral Studies.

Under her direction the NEC choirs have been featured on several live and pre-recorded broadcasts, including the North Carolina based station WCPE Great Sacred Music, WICN Public Radio, and WGBH Boston. The choirs can also be heard in collaboration with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project on the BMOP/Sound recording *Paul Moravec: The Blizzard Voices* and, most recently, with the Tanglewood Festival Chorus and the Boston Symphony Orchestra on their Deutsche Grammophon recording of Shostakovich *Symphony No. 13* (released in October 2023)

Washburn's stage credits include appearances as Madame Lidoine in Francis Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Rebecca Nurse in Robert Ward's *The Crucible*, Mother/Allison in the premiere of Lee Hoiby's *This is the Rill Speaking* and others. Her recital and orchestral solo credits are numerous, and her live premiere from Jordan Hall of the late Richard Toensing's *Night Songs and Evening Prayers* with the New England Conservatory Symphonic Winds can be heard on Albany Records.

Conductors' Choir

Graduate choral conductors perform works by
Augustinas, Deng, Gibbs, Lau,
Vaughan Williams, Whitacre, Yi, Youmans
Tuesday, April 30, 8:00 p.m., Burnes Hall

Upcoming Concerts at NEC

Visit necmusic.edu for complete and updated concert and ticketing information

ARTIST DIPLOMA RECITAL: Yeonjae Cho '24, soprano
Monday, April 29, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC SYMPHONY, David Loebel, conductor
Simon *The Block*; Mussorgsky *Pictures at an Exhibition*;
Jennings *Five Miniatures from Greenwich Village*
Tuesday, April 30, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC PHILHARMONIA, Hugh Wolff, conductor
Mahler *Symphony No. 7*
Wednesday, May 1, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

CHAMBER MUSIC GALA
Friday, May 3, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC HONORS ENSEMBLE: TRIO SPONTE
Charles Berofsky, piano; Nicholas Hammel, violin; Yi-I Stephanie Yang, cello
Sunday, May 5, 2023 at 8:00 p.m., Jordan Hall

FIRST MONDAY IN JORDAN HALL, Laurence Lesser, artistic director
Brahms *Trio in C Minor, op. 101*; Chausson *Concerto for Violin, Piano and String Quartet, op. 21*; Miriam Fried, David McCarroll, violin; Angela Park, cello; Ieva Jacubaviciute, Marc-André Hamelin, piano; Terra String Quartet
Monday, May 6, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

TUESDAY NIGHT NEW MUSIC
New music by NEC composers, performed by their peers
Tuesday, May 7, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

Upcoming Concerts at NEC

—continued

NEC HONORS ENSEMBLE: KROMA QUARTET

Clayton Hancock, Arun Asthagiri, violin; Nathan Emans, viola;

Sophia Knappe, cello

Wednesday, May 8, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC CMA HONORS ENSEMBLE: RED BIRD

Karl Henry, voice, cello; Yifei Marine Zhou, voice; Adrian Chabla, voice, piano,

Jacqui Armbruster, voice, viola; Evan Haskin, guitar

Tuesday, May 14, 2024 at 8:00 p.m., Brown Hall

NEC COMMENCEMENT CONCERT

Saturday, May 18, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

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Your gift to The NEC Fund has a direct and immediate impact on student scholarships, NEC's world-class faculty, and a collaborative and innovative learning environment rooted in the highest level of musical excellence.

Please consider making a gift to support NEC at necmusic.edu/give.

Food and drink are not allowed in the concert hall,
and photography and audio or video recording are prohibited.
Assistive listening devices are available for all Jordan Hall concerts;
contact the head usher or house manager on duty or inquire at the Coat Room.
Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of management.

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Welcome to NEC!

I am thrilled to share New England Conservatory's 2023-24 concert season—a celebration of the power of music to connect and inspire one another.

Whether you are seated in one of our concert halls or watching online, we hope you are uplifted by the performances of our students, faculty, and guest artists.

Above all, we thank you for your support of our students as they cultivate their artistry and contribute to the world through music.

A handwritten signature in black ink.

Andrea Kalyn
President

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the music playing?

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Thank you to our generous community of donors who remain committed to elevating the NEC experience and make it possible for our students to continue their artistic pursuits. Every gift to **The NEC Fund** supports all pillars of an NEC education, from scholarship to community engagement, to our world-renowned faculty.



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